IN THE CLAIMS:

Applicant, pursuant to revised 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, submits the following amendments to the claims:

1-5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) A computer implemented method for providing a ranked ~~ranking a~~ set of alternatives according to likelihood, comprising:

(a) configuring, in one or a plurality of electronic databases stored in a storage device of a computer, a set of alternatives, a query set comprising at least one query, and a set of primary bias values, wherein each primary bias value directly associates a particular query with a particular alternative of the set of alternatives, and reflects at least one human expert's prior conception of the degree of predictive value of the query for the particular alternative relative to others;

(b) inputting a user's response to the query into the computer; and

(c) ranking, using a software program stored on the storage device that is operative with a processor of the computer to receive and process the user's response, the alternatives according to relative likelihood, based at least in part on the set of primary bias values to provide a ranked set of alternatives.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 6, wherein ranking the set of alternatives further comprises querying the one or more electronic databases to generate at least one secondary bias value that is based on the corresponding primary bias value and the response to the query, wherein each secondary bias value is associated with a particular alternative of the set of alternatives, and reflects the expert prior conception of the degree of predictive value of the query and response for the particular alternative relative to others, and wherein ranking is based, at least in part, on the secondary bias values, or at least in part on a combination of the primary and secondary bias values.

8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein generating the secondary bias values involves increasing, decreasing or conserving the corresponding primary bias values based on the response to the query.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the query set comprises a plurality of queries, and wherein ranking the alternatives involves summing and averaging of at least one of primary and secondary bias values.

10. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein generating secondary bias values, and ranking the alternatives is achieved, at least in part, by using algorithm 42.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 6, wherein the set of alternatives is a set of alternate medical diagnoses or conditions, wherein the expert is a medical expert, and wherein ranking the alternatives provides a list of alternate medical diagnoses or conditions, ranked according to likelihood.

12. (Previously presented) A computer apparatus for ranking a set of alternatives according to likelihood, comprising:

(a) a computer having a processor and at least one storage device connected thereto;

(b) a database of alternatives, comprising a stored set of alternatives;

(c) a database of queries, comprising a stored set of at least one query;

(d) a primary bias value database, comprising a stored set of primary bias values, wherein each primary bias value directly associates a particular query with a particular alternative of the set of alternatives, and reflects at least one human expert's prior conception of the degree of predictive value of the query for the particular alternative relative to others; and

(e) a stored software program operative with the processor to receive and process a user's response to the query, and to rank the alternatives according to relative likelihood based, at least in part, on the set of primary bias values.

13. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising a user database, comprising user information, wherein the program is operative with the processor to store, access and update user information when new user information is received.

14. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the program is further operative with the processor to track the user information.

15. (Currently amended) A computer implemented method, over a wide-area network, for providing a ranked ~~ranking a~~ set of alternatives according to likelihood, comprising:

(a) configuring, in one or a plurality of electronic databases of a server, a set of alternatives, a query set comprising at least one query, and a set of primary bias values, wherein each primary bias value directly associates a particular query with a particular alternative of the set of alternatives, and reflects at least one human expert's prior conception of the degree of predictive value of the query for the particular alternative relative to others;

(b) inputting a user's response to the query into a computer through a user subsystem;

(c) transmitting the user's response to the server over the wide-area network;

(d) ranking, using a software program that is operative with a processor of the server to receive and process the user's response, the alternatives according to relative likelihood, based at least in part on the set of primary bias values; and

(e) transmitting the ranked set of alternatives to the user subsystem over the wide-area network, whereby the set of alternatives is ranked according to likelihood to provide a ranked set of alternatives.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein ranking the alternatives further comprises querying the one or more electronic databases of the server to generate at least one secondary bias value that is based on the corresponding primary bias value and the response to the query, wherein each secondary bias value is associated with a particular alternative of the set of alternatives, and reflects the expert prior conception of the degree of predictive value of the query for the particular alternative relative to others, and wherein ranking is based, at least in part, on the secondary bias values, or at least in part on a combination of the primary and secondary bias values.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein generating the secondary bias values involves increasing, decreasing or conserving the corresponding primary bias values based on the response to the query.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the query set comprises a plurality of queries, and wherein ranking the alternatives involves summing and averaging of at least one of primary and secondary bias values.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein generating secondary bias values, and ranking the alternatives is achieved, at least in part, by using algorithm 42.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the set of alternatives is a set of alternate medical diagnoses or conditions, wherein the expert is a medical expert, and wherein ranking the alternatives provides a list of alternate medical diagnoses or conditions, ranked according to likelihood.

21. (Currently amended) A computer network apparatus for ranking a set of alternatives according to likelihood, comprising:

(a) a server having a processor and at least ~~lease~~ one storage device connected to the processor;

(b) a database of alternatives, comprising a stored set of alternatives;

(c) a database of queries, comprising a stored set of at least one query;

(d) a primary bias value database, comprising a stored set of primary bias values, wherein each primary bias value directly associates a particular query with a particular alternative of the set of alternatives, and reflects at least one human expert's prior conception of the degree of predictive value of the query for the particular alternative relative to others; and

(e) a stored software program operative with the processor to receive and process, from a user subsystem, a user's response to the query, and to rank the alternatives according to relative likelihood based, at least in part, on the set of primary bias values, for transmission to the user subsystem.

22. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 21, further comprising a user database, comprising user information, wherein the program is operative with the processor to store, access and update user information when new user information is received.

23. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the program is further operative with the processor to track the user information.

24. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein ranking the set of alternatives further-comprises querying at least one database to generate at least one secondary bias value that is based on the corresponding primary bias value and the response to the query, wherein each secondary bias value is associated with a particular alternative of the set of alternatives, and reflects the expert prior conception of the degree of predictive value of the query and response for the particular alternative relative to others, and wherein ranking is based, at least in part, on the secondary bias values, or at least in part on a combination of the primary and secondary bias values.

25. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein ranking the set of alternatives further-comprises querying at least one database to generate at least one secondary bias value that is based on the corresponding primary bias value and the response to the query, wherein each secondary bias value is associated with a particular alternative of the set of alternatives, and reflects the expert prior conception of the degree of predictive value of the query and response for the particular alternative relative to others, and wherein ranking is based, at least in part, on the secondary bias values, or at least in part on a combination of the primary and secondary bias values.